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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method comprising the steps of:
 - receiving a notification from a voicemail server, wherein the notification comprises attributes associated with an incoming message intended for a voice mailbox subscriber of the voicemail server and a voice mailbox identification associated with the voice mailbox subscriber;
 - mapping the voice mailbox identification to an instant messaging identification of an instant messaging client, wherein the voice mailbox subscriber and the instant messaging client are a common entity;
 - querying a presence of the instant messaging client using the instant messaging identification; and
 - forwarding the notification to the instant messaging client if the instant messaging client is available.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising one or more of the step of extracting the voice mailbox identification from the notification; and the step of queuing the notification at the enhanced notification server for a later delivery if the instant messaging client is not available.
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of attaching the incoming message to the notification.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the incoming message is one of a voicemail message and a fax message.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the attributes comprise one or more of an identity of a sender of the incoming message, a date of the incoming message, a time of the incoming message, and a size of the incoming message.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the voice mailbox identification is a telephone number associated with the voice mailbox subscriber.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein the instant messaging identification is an alphanumeric character string associated with the instant messaging client.
8. A system comprising:
 - a voicemail server, wherein the voicemail server is adapted to receive an incoming message intended for a voice mailbox subscriber and to send a notification based on the incoming message;
 - an enhanced notification server in communication with the voicemail server, wherein the enhanced notification server is adapted to extract a voice mailbox identification associated with the voice mailbox subscriber and to map the voice mailbox identification to an instant messaging identification of an instant messaging client; and
 - an instant messaging presence server in communication with the enhanced notification server, wherein the instant messaging presence server is adapted to determine an availability of the instant messaging client based on the instant messaging identification,

wherein when the voicemail server receives the incoming message, the voicemail server sends a notification to the enhanced notification server,

wherein when the enhanced notification server receives the notification, the enhanced notification server queries the instant messaging presence server for the availability of the instant messaging client, and

wherein the enhanced notification server forwards the notification to the instant messaging client if the instant messaging client is available.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein the enhanced notification server queues the notification for a later delivery if the instant messaging client is not available.

10. The system of claim 8, wherein communications between the voicemail server and the enhanced notification server involves an IP networks.

11. The system of claim 8, wherein one of the voicemail server and the enhanced notification server is adapted to attach the incoming message to the notification.

12. The system of claim 8, wherein communications between the enhanced notification server and the instant messaging presence server involves an IP network.

13. The system of claim 8, wherein the incoming message is one of a voicemail message and a fax message.

14. The system of claim 8, wherein the notification is forwarded to the instant messaging client via the instant messaging presence server.

15. The system of claim 8, wherein the voice mailbox identification is a telephone number associated with the voice mailbox subscriber.

16. An enhanced notification server comprising:

a microprocessor adapted to

receive a notification of an incoming message from a voicemail server,

extract a voice mailbox identification from the notification,
map the voice mailbox identification to an instant messaging identification,

query a presence of an instant messaging client associated with the instant messaging identification, and

forward the notification to the instant messaging client if the instant messaging client is available.

17. The enhanced notification server of claim 16, wherein the notification relates to a receipt of an incoming message at the voicemail server.

18. The enhanced notification server of claim 16, wherein the microprocessor is further adapted to query the instant messaging client whether the incoming message should be forwarded via instant messaging.

19. The enhanced notification server of claim 16, wherein the microprocessor is further adapted to retrieve the incoming message from the voicemail server.

20. The enhanced notification server of claim 16, wherein the microprocessor is further adapted to forward the incoming message to the instant messaging client.